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Mr. Carr has forgotten a great many things, but he has learnt nothing of the interpretation put on the constitution of the United States by the late war. He clings to the doctrine of Cass and Douglass, once so popular in the Southwest. He regards slavery as a domestic institution, beyond the jurisdiction of the United States, even in the territories; the attempt to impose any condition upon a commonwealth at the time of its admission is unconstitutional (p. 144), and an infringement upon the equality of the commonwealths (p. 158); the Missouri Compromise was "a transaction in which the North gained everything and conceded nothing" (p. 146); the Mexican war was occasioned by Mexico (p. 199), which received "a very handsome monetary consideration" for the cession of 1848 (p. 219); and the Kansas-Nebraska bill was "a tardy act of justice to the South." It is a curious fact that the Dred Scott decision, although the source of many of the arguments of the author, and often referred to in support of them (*e.g.* on pp. 144, 146, 147, 158, 159, 225, 242), is never quoted by name in this book. The struggle in Missouri in 1861 was precipitated by General Lyon, F. P. Blair and the loyalists, according to Mr. Carr. The index is very deficient, omitting many names and events mentioned in the text.

ROBERT WEIL.

History of Agriculture and Prices in England. By JAMES E. THOROLD ROGERS. Vols. V and VI (1583-1702). Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1887. — 849, 768 pp.

The present instalment of this noble work covers the period between the rise of prices in Elizabeth's reign and the beginning of the reign of Anne. The plan followed is the same as that of the earlier volumes. The basis of the work is the statistical tables which fill alternate volumes, and which contain statements by years of the prices of grain, meat, and other agricultural products, fish, fuel, the metals, building materials, textile fabrics, imported commodities of all kinds, and labor. These are also arranged by years and decades. The sources whence the prices are derived are the accounts of various colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, those of Eton and Winchester, and a number of individuals and families. The material is entirely new. Based upon it are the deductions contained in the text of the companion volumes. But the work, when complete to 1793, will be more than a history of prices. It will be a social history of England, for it traces not only the development of agriculture, but that of foreign and domestic trade, of manufactures, of the currency, of taxation, the progress of the artisan and the agricultural laboring classes, and the distribution of wealth. It is a monument of labor and learning such as few men in any age have been

able to erect. When one compares it with works of a similar character published in Germany, he notices at once that it surpasses them all in wealth of purely economic material, though it is inferior to them in its treatment of the legal development which modified the production and distribution of wealth. Enough, however, is given to show that the influence of government was sufficiently strong, and, in the opinion of the author, to a large extent injurious.

Some of the results of his study of the period before us have already been published by Professor Rogers in his *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, and in his *First Nine Years of the Bank of England*, but the material contained in the present volumes is so ample as to make substantially a new work. Their contents, so far as they are of permanent historical importance, may be briefly summed up as follows :

Between 1583 and 1642 the price of wheat, as compared with the average of the previous forty years, increased 209 per cent, and the prices of all kinds of grain used for food increased on the average 166 per cent. Animal food became dearer during the same period by 184 per cent ; fuel by 89 per cent. The wages of labor rose, however, only 106 per cent. Or, if the average be changed so as to show the actual relative increase of the prices of provisions and of labor during the period in question, it appears that they rose in the proportion of three to one. During these years also occurred a series of unusually severe droughts. The causes assigned for this rapid rise of prices are the importation of the precious metals through increased foreign trade, and the steady growth of population unaccompanied by any improvement in the methods of agriculture. During this time those who depended wholly upon their labor for support were at a disadvantage, because wages rose so much less rapidly than the cost of living. They needed every possible aid to save them from ruin. But instead, the act of the 5 Elizabeth, cap. 4, was passed, which gave the justices of quarter sessions power to fix the rates of wages annually for husbandmen and artisans, and to compel all of the latter class to serve an apprenticeship. According to the terms of the act, regard was to be had to the condition and needs of the laborer, but these were little heeded. The justices belonged to the landlord and employing class. At last, they had an opportunity to screw the laborer down to a mere pittance, to rob him of the advantage he had possessed since the fourteenth century. They availed themselves of the chance to the full. The copies of justices' assessments which Professor Rogers has collected show that the rates they established were lower than those actually paid. They were so low that they could not be enforced. As it was, however, the wages of the unskilled laborer sank to such a degree that they would not procure for him the necessities of life, and advances had to be made out of the poor

rates. In this way the English peasant, who during the middle age had lived in the enjoyment of "rude abundance," sank into a condition of distress approaching pauperism. Population continued to breed, much as that of Ireland does at the present time. The act concerning parochial settlement, passed after the Restoration, bound the laborer to the locality where he was born, and so deprived him of the benefit of competition for his services.

By the middle of the century the sufferings of the peasantry were at their height. The masses of the English people received no benefit from the triumph either of parliament or the king. Their interests were disregarded by both alike. After 1660 wages slowly rose till near the close of the century, and then remained stationary until the time of Arthur Young's tours. But the rise Professor Rogers attributes to repeated visitations of the plague, and to the fact that the justices by their assessments had reduced wages too low for their own interest and had to remove the pressure a little. In explaining variations of price in general he assigns but little weight to fluctuations of the currency, as compared with movements of the population and the influence of law.

Meantime the conditions were very unfavorable for the tenant farmer. Rents increased rapidly, owing to the economic conditions already mentioned. Besides this the carrying out of improvements by the tenant was almost invariably made an excuse for a further raising of rents. Also, Professor Rogers believes that the Statute of Frauds, passed in 1677, operated to reduce to tenancies at will many freeholds which had been created and conveyed by ancient legal forms, but did not rest upon documentary evidence. It is mainly in this way that he explains the rapid disappearance of freeholders between the Restoration and the Revolution. Hence the origin of the agricultural system of modern England, with its three classes of landlord, tenant, and laborer, is explained largely by the rise of prices in the first half of the seventeenth century, the effects of which were intensified and made destructive for both tenant and laborer by the selfish policy of the landlords. Not only are Professor Roger's investigations valuable for the student of history, but they must have an important practical bearing upon the land question in England to-day. As an historian the author is bound to condemn an institution thus established and maintained. It is without historic justification. As an English liberal he naturally insists that the land system of that country should be dealt with according to its merits, irrespective of any claims which may arise on the ground of its antiquity.

H. L. OSGOOD.